

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs**  
**Meeting – March 1, 2004**  
**10:30 am**

**MINUTES**

Members Present:

Rep. John Aguilera – Chairman  
Mr. Salvador Soto – Vice Chairman  
Ms. Jenny Sarabia – Executive Director  
Rep. Richard McClain  
Mr. Gregorio Chavez, Jr.  
Mr. Ronnie Cantu  
Dr. Mary Ilu Altman  
Mrs. Karen Martinez  
Mrs. Claudia Fuentes  
Mr. Dan Gavito  
Ms. Mara Candelaria-Reardon  
Mr. Manuel Gonzalez  
Mr. Mike Draper (Proxy – Department of Workforce Development)  
Ms. Sandra Leek

Staff Present:

Mr. Lawrence McCormack

Absent:

Senator Vi Simpson  
Senator Tom Wyss  
Ms. Myrna Maldonado  
Ms. Juana Watson  
Ms. Evelyn Ridley-Turner  
Ms. Cheryl Sullivan  
Mrs. Carmen Quintana

I) **Introductions:**

A Call meeting – verify quorum:

- 1 Rep. Aguilera welcomed the Commission members who were present and waited on a quorum. He asked the members who were not at the previous meeting on January 22, 2004 to introduce themselves. Mr. Chavez described his work with a Hispanic radio station in South Bend and the LULAC organization. Rep. Richard McClain stated that he was from Logansport. Mr. Dan Gavito shared that he was from NISOURCE in Merrillville. Mike Draper told the Commission members that he would be acting as proxy for Commissioner Alan Degner of the Department of Workforce Development, who could not attend. Dr. Mary Ilu Altman also presented the Commission with the news of her new promotion to Director of Student Services and Diversity Enhancement for the Purdue School of Nursing.
- 2 There were a few members of the audience who stated they were Jerome McCloskey, new general counsel for the Department of Commerce; Martha Carvajal, Senator Evan Bayh's office, Marvin Sulva, La Ola Latinoamericana and the Indiana Mexican Alliance.
- 3 Rep. Aguilera informed the commission that a quorum was now present. He urged Commission members to share their calendar dates for meetings. Discussed the structure that he wanted the Commission to follow with the sub-committees bringing forth issues to each meeting. However the body should rule the agenda and will meet once a month. Commission members should choose a sub-committee that matches the individual's area of interest.
- 4 Dr. Altman relayed that she wanted to keep the question and answer session at the end of Commission meetings. Rep. Aguilera suggested that the Commission should speak to the media as a whole. Mr. Gavito agreed with the structure, but wanted more initial work from the sub-committees before bringing issues to the table. Mrs. Fuentes reminded the Commission that many sub-committees are only staffed by one member. Rep. Aguilera agreed and pressed the members to participate actively on their sub-committees. Mr. Gonzales questioned how the sub-committees are set up and what their responsibilities are. Rep. Aguilera contested that there should be 3 to 4 members on each sub-committee with outside advisors welcome. Mr. Gonzalez asked if only Commission members could sit on sub-committees. Rep. McClain continued by asking who will keep the sub-committees on track. Rep. Aguilera replied that the Commission would be responsible.

B Review minutes from 1-22-04

- 1 Rep. Aguilera called a vote on the minutes and they were accepted unanimously.

II) **Commission Business:**

A Issues

- 1 Statewide conference or something similar to demonstrate the Commission's success

- (a) Rep. Aguilera relayed the need to set up a mechanism to accept money from other entities such as State Farm, who want to donate \$5000. Could also plan signature events for the community, which would be partnered with existing events or planned by Commission. The Commission could use these events to demonstrate the progress being made during funding years in the General Assembly.

Ms. Candelaria-Reardon discussed the use of strategic planning or a consultant, which Rep. Aguilera agreed with. Mr. Chavez shared that there is a person in Indianapolis who consults and the Commission could also use the Indiana Latino Institute's resources. However Mrs. Fuentes reminded the Commission that the Executive Director could handle those responsibilities.

Mr. Soto interjected the need for an untied mission for the Commission because everyone needs to be on the same page. Mrs. Fuentes added that the statute is already clear. She feels that the Commission does not need strategic planning because we have an executive director. Ms. Candelaria-Reardon stated that she is an executive director, but she could still use some assistance. Rep. Aguilera shared that the Commission does not need to hire outside, but should still pursue a strategic plan. Mr. Soto related that the Commission should act sooner rather than later.

Ms. Sarabia suggested that the Commission work on the by-laws before attempting to find outside help. Rep. Aguilera agreed with the internal solution, and urged the Commission to come together in the coming months to formulate the by-laws. He then posed the question to the members.

Dr. Altman agreed with the internal approach with the utilization of Ms. Sarabia's expertise. Rep. Aguilera appealed to the members to forward their suggestions to Ms. Sarabia to assist her with the by-laws. Mr. Gonzalez reminded the Commission that there is a need to lay a new structure because this is a new Commission. Stated concerns about economic development not being on the Lt. Governor's agenda as an example of the purpose of the Commission. There are solid ideas, which should be used such as the foundation that has already been set by the previous two Commissions.

Rep. Aguilera agreed with Mr. Gonzalez and restated the need for a strong structure and also a filtering mechanism to ensure the Commission stays on track with the issues that are facing the community. Mr. Gonzalez shared that he feels there has been no progress since the initial report produced by the Commission. Mr. Gavito questioned if there has been work produced already, has it been memorialized and could it be used as a basis for future addition. Mr. Gonzalez replied that there were reports. Mr. Gavito then asked about past mission statements.

Ms. Sarabia stated the first Commission formulated a mission statement for the Governor. She continued with the second Commission, which produced good work that could be used. However neither Commission began any programs in the community. This is a new body with duties

and directives, which has to move ahead. Need structure and basis, but the Commission can move ahead, but need volunteers from within the Commission.

Ms. Leek interjected that she is at the Civil Rights Commission and knows a great deal about different commissions. There is a need to bring action to the community to demonstrate the purpose of the Commission. She recalled that from her experience, economic development advances other agendas.

Rep. Aguilera suggested discussing the issue during the May meeting.

Mrs. Fuentes recalled that Ms. Quintana had volunteered to help with the writing of the bi-laws. Ms. Sarabia said she did not want to volunteer Ms. Quintana without her consent. Rep. Aguilera asked the sub-committee members to be ready to present at the next meeting. Mr. Soto added that he still wants to research the use of a non-cost consultant. Mrs. Fuentes suggested that possibility for the next meeting

- (b) Executive board that will meet, make decisions and report. Rep. Aguilera told the members that he and the officers will be meeting with Ms. Sarabia to set up the agenda for the next meeting.
- (c) *Closing the Achievement Gap* from the Tomás Rivera Institute. Rep. Aguilera distributed the pamphlet to the members and discussed its use by the NHCSL and NBCSL in state legislatures. Wants the education sub-committee to track the issue. Ms. Candelaria-Reardon volunteered to chair the education sub-committee.
- (d) Commission member attendance tracking. Rep. Aguilera stressed the importance of participation and attendance.
- (e) Determination of issues to be addressed by the Commission. Rep. Aguilera stated that the Commission will set the agenda.
- (f) Monthly Financial Report. [Ms. Sarabia passed out a report from the Department of Workforce Development detailing the financial transactions of the Commission.] She explained that she had been quite frugal during her tenure as Executive Director.

B. Mr. Salvador Soto

- 1 Traveling meetings – Mr. Soto recalled that he had been approached regarding the purpose the Commission. He was asked if he was the regional representative and why there are not regional meetings. He would like to have regional meetings in different parts of the state to allow the public to express their views.

Ms. Sarabia stated that the lay members were selected due to their location in the state and should be prepared to facilitate input from the public. This would help to bring regional concerns to the Commission. Mr. Gavito agreed and brought up the idea of an “open mic.” Rep. Aguilera told the members that the previous Commission tried this idea and he likes the forum concept. However he expressed concerns about excessive traveling. Ms. Leek added concern about choosing the correct time of day to allow access for the most

people. Rep. Aguilera asked the members to bring this issue to the next meeting.

### C. Executive Director Report

- 1 New BMV regulations – (hand out). Ms. Sarabia wanted everyone to have an update of the regulations from the BMV. Rep. Aguilera related to the members that some changes occurred with different primary documentation. However some members of the community are dubious of the changes out of fear of being arrested.

Mr. Chavez shared that in South Bend with the BMV asking for more documents from Hispanics than other individuals. Rep. Aguilera added that some people have to wait for document verification. Ms. Sarabia told the members that she has been working with the BMV to gain more cultural sensitivity. She needs Commission members to work with the BMV to work out problems. Rep. Aguilera asked for a letter from the Commission to BMV requesting information on Hispanic issues.

Mr. Gonzales reminded the members that they need to stay on top of the issue. Indiana is attracting media attention. Martha Carvajal (Senator Bayh's office) told the Commission that most people have no idea of the problems occurring at the BMV. Rep. Aguilera asked to bring someone from the BMV to attend the next Commission meeting. Ms. Leek and Mr. Gonzalez also asked to be involved.

- 2 Commission Budget (hand out) – Ms. Sarabia passed out the budget. Ms. Leek asked question about “resources on order.” Ms. Sarabia explained that she is in need of money for move, printing equipment and other resources. She reminded the members that she has been extremely frugal and asked for in-kind gifts. There will be a summer intern, other internships and 11 volunteers.

#### (a) Current expenditures

- (a) New Office Location – Room 256 outside of Department of Workforce Development.
- (b) Laptops and desktop computers – 2 laptops for volunteers from DWD and 4 desktops from Department of Commerce.
- (c) Grants: Dialog with Ed Perez, State Farm Insurance – Ms. Sarabia recalled that Mr. Perez is interested in donating \$5000 and maybe more.

- 3 Pilot Program, “Sobresalir con el Poder de Leer” – Will be discussed next meeting.
- 4 Discussion. Dr. Altman questioned the cash received \$62,500, which is parcel of funding given out by state government. Ms. Leek asked if Ms. Sarabia planned to allocate \$125,000 and told her to plan to stay away from negatives. Mrs. Fuentes shared that last meeting there were questions about tax-deductible donations. Currently they are not tax-deductible; however she and Al Degner are working on setting up a 501-C-3. Ms. Leek said there can be problems with special funds, so the Commission needs to talk to the

Department of Revenue. Mr. Soto added that there are ways around the problem by discussing the problem with the Commission's contacts.

\* There was a motion to approve the ledger and it was passed unanimously.

II) Public: Question and Answer

- A Marvin Sulva pointed out that the main concern is the license and the Commission should change the law. There is a fear that you will be arrested if you go to the BMV. You need a license to work, provide for the family. There should be representation from the Mexican-American Alliance, The Hispanic Center, local churches at Commission meetings.